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30 NOV 1978

NFAC CONTRIBUTION TO DCI ANNUAL REPORT

I. 1978 in Intelligence

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A. 1. a. NFAC's first full year

The year began with the establishment of the National Foreign Assessment Center (NFAC) as a new organizational home for analytic components directly supporting the DCI. The principal effect of this restructuring was to bring together the National Intelligence Officers and CIA's analytic offices under a single chief, the Deputy Director for National Foreign Assessment^(DD/NFA). The move underscored the DCI's responsibility for coordinating the intelligence production activities of the entire Community, and NFAC's role as his principal agent in this area.

NFAC's dual role, incorporating both CIA and Community responsibilities, was highlighted during 1978 in the process of institutionalizing the National Intelligence Topics (NITs). These lists of long-term and short-term substantive requirements and priorities, which had been developed by the policymakers late in 1977 at the President's request, were coordinated by an interagency Steering Group led by DD/NFA. Both the questions and the priorities were reviewed on several occasions by the NSC Policy Review Committee (Intelligence); they were approved and published as Community guidance in August.

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WORKING PAPER

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[Executive Order 12036 made clear the consumers' primary responsibility to set priorities for the Intelligence Community. The NITs are the formal expression of these consumer priorities. The big difference between the NIT process and those it replaced--such as the Key Intelligence Questions (KIQs)--is that guidance in the past has been prepared by the Intelligence Community based on what it assumed were the policymakers' needs.

The NITs actually include two separate sets of priorities:

- Topics of Basic Interest intended to guide the ^{ul} development of capabilities for collection, research, and analysis over the longer term;
- the more specific Current Interest topics that tell intelligence collectors and producers what top policymakers need over the next six to nine months.

The lists are reviewed and updated by the PRC(I) every four months to keep them current. The principal voice in the updating process is, again, that of the policymaker.

Since their inception, the NITs have served as a basis for reviewing analytical production programs to ensure that the output is responsive to the policymakers' questions. The NITs are also guiding the preparation of more specific and detailed intelligence requirements, particularly those contained in ^{and PROACs} in order to give the collectors as precise guidance as possible.]

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The NFAC Production Board has been the primary mechanism for developing our own production program by bringing together the NIOs and Office Directors on defined problems. Once the NITs were formulated, the Production Board served as the vehicle for reviewing and adapting production plans to ensure responsiveness to the policy-makers' requirements.

The Steering Group composed of the Directors of INR and DIA and DD/NFA (Chairman) was reactivated to coordinate the focusing of Community production on the NITs. The various NIOs, working with their [Substantive] colleagues in the other agencies, took on the responsibility of sorting out the details of an integrated Community effort to satisfy consumers' needs.

By the end of the year the procedures for reviewing, updating, and evaluating the NITs were being worked out on an interagency basis, and preparations were under way to report to the PRC(I) on the results of the first four-month period.

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